

NEWS RELEASE

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE, DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Carol A. Murray, Commissioner

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NEW COLEBROOK INTERPRETIVE CENTER OPENS MAY 18
PART OF EXPANDED AND RENOVATED WELCOME CENTER ON U.S. ROUTE 3

Visitors to New Hampshire's most northern Welcome Center will be greeted by exhibits and information provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at the new Great North Woods Interpretive Center when the facility on U.S. Route 3 in Colebrook opens for business on May 18.

The interpretive center is part of extensive renovations to the Colebrook Welcome Center, which include the addition of 1,500 square feet of space to the building. The North Country Chamber of Commerce has an office and conference room in the renovated section of the rest area. The Great Woods Interpretive Center and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge share a new room that includes exhibit space, tourism information, a regional calendar of events, and information on the Conte Refuge.

The purpose of the interpretive center is to highlight the culture, natural diversity, history, business, recreational and tourism features of the upper Great North Woods region of New Hampshire. Visitors will also learn about the role of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Wildlife Refuge System. A series of seasonal natural history displays will begin with this year's topic, "Conserving Grasslands".

The Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge is one of more than 530 refuges in the National Wildlife Refuge System administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Conte Refuge promotes conservation of native plants and animals and their habitats throughout the Connecticut River watershed through educational and conservation activities with private and public partners, including the NHDOT.

Staffed by New Hampshire Department of Transportation personnel, the renovated Colebrook Welcome and Interpretive Center will be open daily from May 18 to October 18.

RLR Enterprises, Inc. of Center Conway, New Hampshire was the general contractor for the \$232,000 project.